Examples of Introduction Section: Interview Report

**Exhibit 1: Introductory Segment**

This memo is a report of the data gathered for the multigenre career assignment. I interviewed Mary Adams, a member of the technical writing staff at the Space Dynamics Lab in Logan, Utah. The Space Dynamics Lab (SDL) is a not-for-profit organization, employing over 300 people, including professionals, students, and interns. SDL produces and tests infrared calibration and optical equipment that are part of the various satellite systems. It holds contracts with elite organizations, such as NASA, Boeing, and the United State military. Mary is part of a technical writing team that works closely with professional engineers to produce various documents explaining the operations of SDL.

I chose to interview Mary because I am interested in becoming a technical writer after I graduate. Mary’s interview allowed me to become acquainted with SDL’s writing processes. The following report describes what I learned from Mary’s comments and suggestions, including her preparation for a career in technical writing, the role technical documents play in the mission of the organization, and her suggestions for success.

**Exhibit 2: Introductory Segment**

The following is a report on my interview conducted with Boulder, Colorado based freelance writer, Erin Blakemore. At only twenty-five years old, Miss Blakemore has made a name for herself not only within the freelance business, but also as a contract paralegal at a large law firm in Denver. As an aspiring freelance myself who also has considered heading into law, I found Miss Blakemore to be a very appropriate choice for this project. Not only does she work within the areas I wish to pursue, but she also lives and works out of Colorado. Where I will be relocating following my upcoming graduation. In my research, I came across the website for the Boulder Alliance through which I found a database of member names and email addresses and short descriptions of their work. Using this information, I was able to contact Miss Blakemore and conduct an interview with her via email.

**Exhibit 3: Introductory Segment**

The following is the report you requested on my future career, detailing the experiences of a professional, how he became interested in this career, and what types of communication he does in his position. As I am interested in a career in neurology, I interviewed Dr. Jonathan Hopkins, a neurosurgeon at Borgess Medical Center, via email to learn about some of the vital aspects of communication in his career and workplace. Dr. Hopkins was a clear choice for me because I had heard great things about him from family and friends, and I am familiar with his place of work. He is also known for his willingness to share his career and knowledge with students, which made him a very pleasant subject to interview. This report details my findings regarding the communication aspects of Dr. Hopkins’ profession, including the common types and genres of writing, and this report describes Dr. Hopkin’s advice for students interested in pursuing this career.

Example of Background Information Sections: Interview Report

**Background**

Jen Bishop graduated in May 2004 from the University of Wisconsin with a major in English with a technical communications emphasis. She favored English in high school and loved the first-year writing course offered at the university. She had originally been an elementary education major but decided to switch because she didn’t want to take the math requirement. She had no understanding of technical communications when she entered the program. When it came time to go into the work force, Jen felt very unprepared. However, she has begun to realize that college training is filled in by the specific company’s goals and agendas, which she is learning on the job. Jen did one internship for a law firm immediately after graduating. Her major tasks were policy and procedure writing as well as employee profiles for the Internet.

**Company Profile**

She has been with the Farm Management Company, a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for two-and-a-half months. The main branch of the Farm Management Company is located at Salt Lake City, Utah. The purpose of the company is to establish farms where there are either lots of church members or where there is need for humanitarian aid. The farms make a profit and are able to aid those who are in poverty at the same time. It has been operating for about 20 years. Jen’s office serves as administration for the farms.

**Responsibilities**

Jen was hired at Farm Management Company on a project basis, with the possible option to stay as a permanent employee. She is the only technical communicator on staff, and her four major tasks require skill in both written and oral communication. These tasks include

**Job Descriptions.** All positions in the company have a job description which must be regularly updated for records and for hiring purposes. Jen managed all aspects of these updates. The task, she emphasized, requires continual attention because company positions frequently change and existing descriptions can quickly become outdated.

**Policy and Procedure Manuals.** Farm Management Company is an international company with many different farms across the world and thousands of employees. Procedure manuals are made for personnel ranging from the accounting department to the field hands. These manuals seek to gain compliance with the company’s policies, provide safety precautions, and help unify the work of people in different locations with similar jobs. Jen’s work with these manuals requires she gather information about updates and then write up the changes. She is also responsible for occasionally creating a new manual from scratch.

**Copy Editing.** Jen also copyedits documents. One of her upcoming tasks will involve policy and procedure manuals written in Spanish. Because she is fluent in Spanish, she has sought out this opportunity to broaden her language experience and possibly demonstrate skills that could allow her to advance in the company.

**Meetings with Office Managers.** To obtain the information she needs for documents, Jen often must meet with people in the company to get a clear understanding of the protocol they follow in their jobs so she can explain processes to those with similar jobs in other branches. She feels the oral communication skills needed to interview people and conduct these meetings is critical to performing her job effectively.